

## Supplementary File 2: Semi-Structured Interview Guide

### 1. Warm up

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. As outlined in the Plain Language Statement I sent you, this interview forms part of a larger study we are wanting to work with long day care centres to design appropriate support and resources that will enable healthy environmentally sustainable food provision.

Before we start, I would like to reconfirm that you are consenting to this interview being audio-recorded. [If decline – take comprehensive hand notes]

- Can I also confirm what your role is within the centre .....
- How long you've been working in this role.....
- And your highest educational attainment .....

**2. Before we start on the interview questions, I'm interested to know what motivated you to participate in this interview?** [open ended answer]

**3. As I said, this study is looking at healthy, environmentally sustainable food provision in long day care centres. I'd like to ask you how you would describe or define healthy, environmentally sustainable food provision – what does it mean to you? There are no right or wrong answers here, I'm just interested in your own views.** [open ended answer]

Prompts:

- Healthy – food provided to children meets their nutritional needs; meets menu planning guidelines; pleasant eating environment
- Environmentally sustainable – little waste (food and packaging); composting; recycling; growing own produce to use

*through iterative themes emerging some additional prompts:*

- *We have observed through other interviews that centre staff feels confident with what “healthy” means, but a little unsure about the environmental sustainability of things, what are your thoughts on this?*

**4a. Are there any activities or practices that your centre is doing or has done to combine environmental sustainability and healthy food provision?**

Prompts:

- menu planning - types of foods? where food is purchased?
- systems / practices in place e.g.: compost bins, using up leftovers

*through iterative themes emerging some additional prompts:*

- *Some centres have told us that they involve the children in planning and problem solving. For example in planning the menu or in helping with the garden. Can you tell me a bit more about some of these practices in your centre or whether this is something that would be practical to implement?*

**4b. Why do you think your centre has been successful in doing these activities/practices?**

Prompts:

- any specific support / resources that have helped – describe these?
- do you use any websites – if yes, which?
- do you access HEAS support – if yes, what?

*through iterative themes emerging some additional prompt: Centres have been telling us that when their centre “ethos” or culture is around environmental sustainability this is a key to success. What are your thoughts on this?*

**5. What do you believe are barriers that make it difficult for centres to combine environmentally sustainability and healthy food provision in an affordable way?**

Prompts:

- menu planning – trying to cater for child preferences, allergies (and to meet the budget)
- food purchasing – trying to buy local produce? packaging of food products? (budget?)
- serving food – are unserved foods reused?
- food waste – managing a compost bin?
- growing own produce - managing a veggie garden and using it?

*through iterative themes emerging some additional prompts:*

- *A theme that has emerged in our interviews is that food cost can be a factor here. Can you tell me a little more about this in your centre and in the context that we have discussed?*

- *Other centres have told us that when educators sit with the children and model eating, they perceive that their food waste is less. Can you tell us your thoughts on modelling and environmentally sustainable food provision practices?*

## **6. What support do you think would be helpful for centres to combine environmental sustainability and healthy food provision?**

Prompts:

- Knowledge and skills of staff – Fact sheets? Training (in what format e.g.: online)?
- *through iterative themes emerging some additional prompt: Other centres have told us that a simple infographic or resource to understand what healthy & sustainable food provision is would be helpful. What are your thoughts?*
- Resources for the centre
  - Budget – what for and why?
  - Equipment – what for and why?
  - Time – what for and why?
  - Other?

## **7. Provide an overall summary and explain next steps:**

Thank you so much for taking part in this interview.

The next steps include us interviewing other centres and then pulling together some ideas/strategies which we'd like to discuss further with centres. We will invite you to a focus group over the coming months to assist us in refining these. After the focus groups, we'll then be working with the Healthy Eating Advisory Service to provide centres with relevant support and strategies to assist them in combining environmental sustainability and healthy food provision.

## **8. Do you have any last questions for me or comments? [open response]**